

ACADEMY COUNCIL MEETING – 18 November 2014

Summary of key issues

Last meeting for Professor Terence Stephenson as Chair of the Academy

This was the final meeting of the Council for Professor Terence Stephenson prior to his taking his new role as Chair of the GMC. The Council warmly thanked Terence for all his work for the Academy and wished him well in his new role.

New Academy Chair

The Council congratulated Professor Dame Sue Bailey, immediate past President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, on her election as Academy Chair.

Welcome

The Council welcomed Dr Suzy Lishman, new President of the Royal College of Pathologists to her first meeting of the Council.

New Academy member – Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Health (FSRH)

The Council agreed an application from the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Health to join the Academy. FSRH will become a member from 1 January 2015.

Choosing Wisely

The Council agreed to the Academy taking forward a major “Choosing Wisely” programme of work. “Choosing Wisely” is part of a wide movement in developed healthcare systems around issues of over-use and over-medicalisation. It aims to promote conversations between doctors and patients to choose care that is supported by evidence; not duplicative of other tests or procedures already received, free from harm and truly necessary

As an initial part of the process Colleges and Specialist Societies will be asked to identify tests, interventions or procedures commonly used in their field, whose necessity should be questioned and discussed.

Whilst the process must be clinically led, NHS England is interested in supporting the process and there will be discussions as to how this could be taken forward.

It is hoped to be in a position to launch the programme in the New Year

The Accountable Clinician – Phase 2

Following on from the publication of the Academy’s successful guidance on the “Responsible Consultant/Clinician” for hospital in-patients (“The Name over the Bed”), the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt, has asked the Academy to produce similar guidance for care delivered in all other settings.

The Council recognised that this was an important, if complex, piece of work that should be taken forward. A Steering Group, to be jointly chaired by Dr David Richmond (President RCOG, and Academy Vice-Chair) and Professor Mike Pringle (President of the RCGP) will be set up to take forward the work.

Shape of Training

The Council considered the current position on the Shape of Training Review including the brief statement from the Shape Steering Group.

The Council was clear that any recommendations to ministers were those of the four UK Health Departments and could not be presented as having the endorsement of the Academy and Colleges.

Members were clear that there was still broad support for the thrust of the proposals which reflect the changing context of healthcare and needs of patients and should help deliver better patient care. However there remain many issues of detail to be addressed. There are strong concerns from some specialties and some trainees about ensuring that the length of specialty training is appropriate.

It was agreed to write to the four health departments making clear the current Academy and College position.

Five Year Forward View

The Council welcomed the publication of the recent Five Year Forward View and the wish from NHS England to engage Colleges in taking forward the proposals. There are two seminars with Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of NHS England to explore issues around the Five Year Forward View in December and January.

Integrated care statement

In view of the current debate on integrated care, the Council endorsed a joint proposal from the RCP London and the RCGP for a cross-College statement on the vision of and commitment to integrated care. Following sign-off of the detailed wording it is hoped the statement will be published shortly.

Sepsis

The Council considered a request from NHS England for College involvement in taking forward work to improve the prompt recognition and management of sepsis. The Council recognised there was considerable work already underway and was keen to ensure there was no duplication of effort but agreed it would be helpful to set up an initial meeting with NHS England to see how work might be taken forward.

Assisted Dying

In the light of the renewed debate around assisted dying the Council re-affirmed the current Academy policy of not taking a position on the issue. Members recognised that there are very mixed views amongst doctors on the issue which is actually a decision for society as whole and law-makers. The Council was, however, clear in its view that everyone should be entitled to a high quality end of life experience.

College International Activity

The Council agreed to seek bids from Colleges interested in supporting the International Forum and providing co-ordination of College international activity.

Faculty of Medical Informatics

The Council support a proposal from the RCP London and the RCGP to take forward work on the development of a Faculty of Medical Informatics.